

AA-2066

Built 1927

Marley Neck School

(Hall Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church Hall)

Solley community, Glen Burnie vicinity

Private

Built in 1927, the Marley Neck School is significant as an example of a Rosenwald School, and as such represents a landmark era in black education in the period before federal support of local education. Rosenwald Schools were built with matching funds provided by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, which was a private foundation named for the Chicago entrepreneur who directed the booming growth of Sears, Roebuck & Company in the early 20th century.

Between 1917 and 1932, the Rosenwald Fund helped build over 5,300 schools for blacks in the rural south. Approximately 292 were built in Maryland. Of that number 24 were constructed in Anne Arundel County. Marley Neck School is one of only five known surviving Anne Arundel County examples.

This school, as with all Rosenwald Schools, was built according to a standardized plan provided by the Rosenwald Fund. These cost and space efficient plans were developed for the Fund by leading educational experts and represented state of the art designs. As a result they were often employed in the construction of contemporary white schools and in schools after the Fund ceased operation.

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MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Development Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance (1870-1930)

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): architecture; education

Resource Type:

Category Type: Building

Historic Environment: rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): school, church hall

Known Design Source: *Community School Plans*, published by the Julius Rosenwald Fund

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. AA-2066

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Marley Neck School (preferred)

and/or common Hall Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church Hall

2. Location

street & number 7780 Solley Road ☐ not for publication

city, town Glen Burnie ☐ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Anne Arundel

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees of Hall Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church

street & number 7780 Solley Road telephone no.:

city, town Glen Burnie state and zip code: Maryland 21060

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse liber 207

street & number Franklin Street folio 32

city, town Annapolis state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. AA-2066

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☐ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Marley Neck School located on the west side of Solley Road, near the intersection with Nabbs Creek Road. It stands directly south of Hall Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church and currently functions as a Sunday School building and meeting hall for that church's congregation. The church and school share a 4.65 acre parcel of land. Heavy stands of mature trees surround the perimeter of the lot, with a few individual trees located within the church and school yard.

Measuring approximately 68' x 20', the Marley Neck School is a long, narrow, side-gable frame building. Walls are sheathed in sections of roughly 4' long clapboards and rest on a low concrete pier foundation. The low-pitched roof features open eaves with exposed rafter ends, and mitered verge boards accenting the gable ends.

Window openings, generally a defining characteristic of Rosenwald Schools, are significantly altered. Originally, the front (east) façade contained a bay of seven closely-set sash windows on either side of the centrally-located entrance. In addition, a smaller sash window immediately flanked the doorway. All front window openings are currently either enclosed or in reduced size. The front façade now contains six pairs (three on either side of the door) of small, modern, sliding sash windows. The front door appears original. It features six lights above three recessed horizontal panels. A small shed-roof porch hood, supported by large, scrolled brackets, protects the doorway, and the concrete step below.

Alterations to the rear façade are also extensive. Large sections of wall cladding have been replaced and most windows have been infilled or altered. Two windows remain. The sash window located immediately adjacent the door may be original. The other is a modern sliding window like that found in the main façade. The back door features six recessed panels, and is possibly original to the building. A partially rebuilt porch hood, similar to that found on the front protects it and the concrete steps below,

A small louvered ventilator window is located in the upper part of the gable ends. Wall cladding has failed in areas and is replaced by plywood boards. The north end contains a pair of sliding glass windows identical to those found throughout the rest of the building. A small counter has been installed directly beneath it. A poured concrete deck, measuring approximately 5'x'7' is located directly adjacent this window opening. This arrangement allows refreshments to be served from inside the buildings.

The Marley Neck School remains in fair condition, but repairs need to be made to prevent further deterioration. The interior is altered: it consists of one large room partitioned at the south end for a kitchen and bathrooms.

8. Significance

Survey No. AA-2066

Period	Areas of Significance---Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) (recreation)

Specific dates 1927 **Builder/Architect** Rosenwald Community School Plan D

Check: Applicable Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
 Level of Significance: ☒ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Marley Neck School and the Julius Rosenwald Fund

The Marley Neck School at Hall Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church is an architecturally significant example of a Rosenwald School design, and as such represents a landmark era in black education in the period before federal support of local education. Rosenwald Schools were built with matching funds provided by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, which was a private foundation created by and named for the Chicago entrepreneur who directed the booming growth of Sears, Roebuck and Company in the early 20th century. Between 1917 and 1932 the Rosenwald Fund helped build over 5,300 schools for blacks in the rural South. Approximately 292 Rosenwald Schools were built in Maryland, of that number 24 were constructed in Anne Arundel County.¹ Built in 1927 at a cost of \$4,300 Marley Neck School was the most expensive Rosenwald School constructed in Anne Arundel County. This two-teacher school is a variation of the Rosenwald design known as *Community School Plan D*. George Fox, Superintendent of Anne Arundel County Schools (1916-1946) developed this variant in cooperation with architects at the Rosenwald Fund.

By deed dated January 19, 1960 Anne Arundel County conveyed the Marley Neck Elementary school building and its associated property to Hall Methodist Church. Since that time it has been used as a social hall and Sunday school.

The Julius Rosenwald Fund

The importance of the Rosenwald Fund's building program to black education can not be overstated. School plans were developed for the Fund by leading educational experts and distributed to the various locales. These state of the art plans reflected the latest theory in spatial organization, and placed a premium on sanitation and ease of maintenance. As a result, these plans were sometimes employed in the construction of contemporary white schools, and in schools built after the Fund ceased to finance school construction. The impact of the Rosenwald Fund extends beyond black education and the time frame in which it operated.

8.1 Significance (continued)

Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932) stands out as one of America's most notable businessmen and philanthropists. At age twenty-five, this son of German Jewish immigrants acquired partial ownership in Sears, Roebuck and Company. Under his management the company became a mail-order merchandising phenomenon. Rosenwald's philanthropy kept well apace of his amassing fortune and, according to estimates, by the time of his death in 1932 he had given away between \$60,000,000 and \$70,000,000. More than \$20,000,000 of this went to black causes.²

According to his biographers, Rosenwald was a great admirer of Booker T. Washington, and was deeply impressed by Washington's climb from poverty to educational leadership. After meeting Booker T. Washington and subsequent visits to the south, Rosenwald, appalled by the condition of southern blacks, made African-American causes in general, and black education in particular, a foremost concern. Rosenwald established an independent foundation with full time administrators to manage his charities. The work of the Julius Rosenwald Fund in southern education stressed four programs: the provision of library service, the education of teachers, the development of centers of higher learning, and foremost, the school building program.

The school building program was done in conjunction with the Boards of Education of the various southern states. Rosenwald was adamant that his efforts only inspire and supplement state initiatives, not replace them. Rosenwald encouraged government and community to work together to address social problems. Before granting financial assistance, the county had to agree to build the school in accordance with plans and physical specifications established by the Fund and agree to maintain the building as a regular part of the school system.

Ideally, a Rosenwald school represented a common effort by the given Board of Education, and both the white and African-American communities. The state and county always bore most of the cost of the building and had to agree to maintain the new building as a regular part of the public-school system. The white community was solicited for financial contributions, or gifts of land and supplies. The black community also made gifts of money, labor and supplies. Records indicate that in Anne Arundel County costs were born entirely by the state, the black community and the Rosenwald Fund, with no support coming from the white community.³ Marley Neck's \$4,300 cost was shared as follows: \$3,000 from Anne Arundel County, \$800 from the African-American community, \$500 from the Rosenwald Fund.

The contributions of the Fund ranged from a minimum of \$200 for a one-teacher school to \$2,600 for a six-teacher building. While at the high school level, the Fund contributed up to \$6,000 for a twelve-teacher structure. In terms of percentages, the Rosenwald Fund's contribution toward the total cost of a school was comparatively small. The Fund, however, provided more than money and architectural plans. Rosenwald's reputation and record of accomplishment secured the trust of the African-American community who, knowing their resources would be used directly for the good of their neighborhood, were inspired to give money and labor. The result was a donation of resources Boards of Education felt compelled to accept. The Rosenwald Fund served not only as a funding source, but also as an important mediator between the black community and the generally all-white Boards of Education.

8.2 Significance (continued)

Between 1917 and 1929, about sixty percent of all schools constructed with assistance from the Rosenwald Fund were of the one- and two-teacher type. Marley Neck is an example of the two-room type. After 1929, in an acceptance of the trend toward school consolidation, funding was gradually withdrawn from small schools and emphasis switched to larger buildings. By the time the Fund's school building program ended in 1932, it had helped to build 5,357 public schools, industrial shops, and teacher's homes in 883 counties of 15 southern states at a total cost of \$28,408,502.

Rosenwald Schools

In 1920 the Rosenwald Fund established an office in Nashville, under the direction of S. L. Smith, an architect with experience in school administration. Smith established an architectural department to research and draw school designs. The input of leading educational theorists was solicited in developing school plans. Rosenwald school plans represented the state-of-the-art in American school architecture.

Designs were simple and efficient, and omitted corridors where possible to save on costs and maximize useable space. Buildings were one-story in height, both because of cost consciousness, and to facilitate evacuation in the event of fire. The buildings were generally sided with weatherboard, nailed over diagonal substrate. Exterior color schemes were white trimmed in gray, gray trimmed in white, or nut brown trimmed in white or cream.

Since there was seldom electricity available, design and placement maximized natural light. Groupings of tall double-hung sash windows are characteristic of all Rosenwald designs. Buildings were oriented with the points of the compass and the plan designed so that every class room would receive either east or west light. Color schemes, seat arrangements and even window shades were specified to make the fullest use of sun light.^{4 5}

The Fund demanded that interiors not be left unpainted. This was for sanitary, aesthetic, and maintenance reasons, but mainly because "It will materially increase the amount of light in the classroom." The Fund permitted only two interior paint schemes.

Color Scheme No. 1: Cream ceiling, buff walls and walnut wainscoting or dado

Color Scheme No. 2: Ivory cream ceiling, light gray walls and walnut stain wainscoting or dado

Contractors were warned not to mix lamp black with white paint in order to make gray as such a mixture would reflect very little light. As a result of these precautions, Smith noted proudly that all Rosenwald designs provided natural light well in excess of the minimums proposed by the National Education Association's Committee on Schoolhouse Planning and Construction.

8.3 Significance (continued)

Interiors featured a sub-floor topped by oiled wooden flooring, wooden tongue-and-groove wainscoting and plaster walls. Desk arrangements were provided. For example, in a 22' x 30' classroom, desks were to be arranged in five rows of nine desks. Each room had a blackboard set at a scientifically determined height. Because chalk dust was known to be a health detriment, chalkboard designs included a chalk trough with a wire net covering. This prevented erasers from absorbing and spreading chalk dust.

Many requirements were associated with the placement and maintenance of privies. The same is true regarding the drinking water supply system.

Rosenwald Fund administrators strictly enforced design guidelines. Regular construction progress reports and photographs were required, and failure to meet deadlines or guidelines resulted in the forfeiture of Rosenwald support.

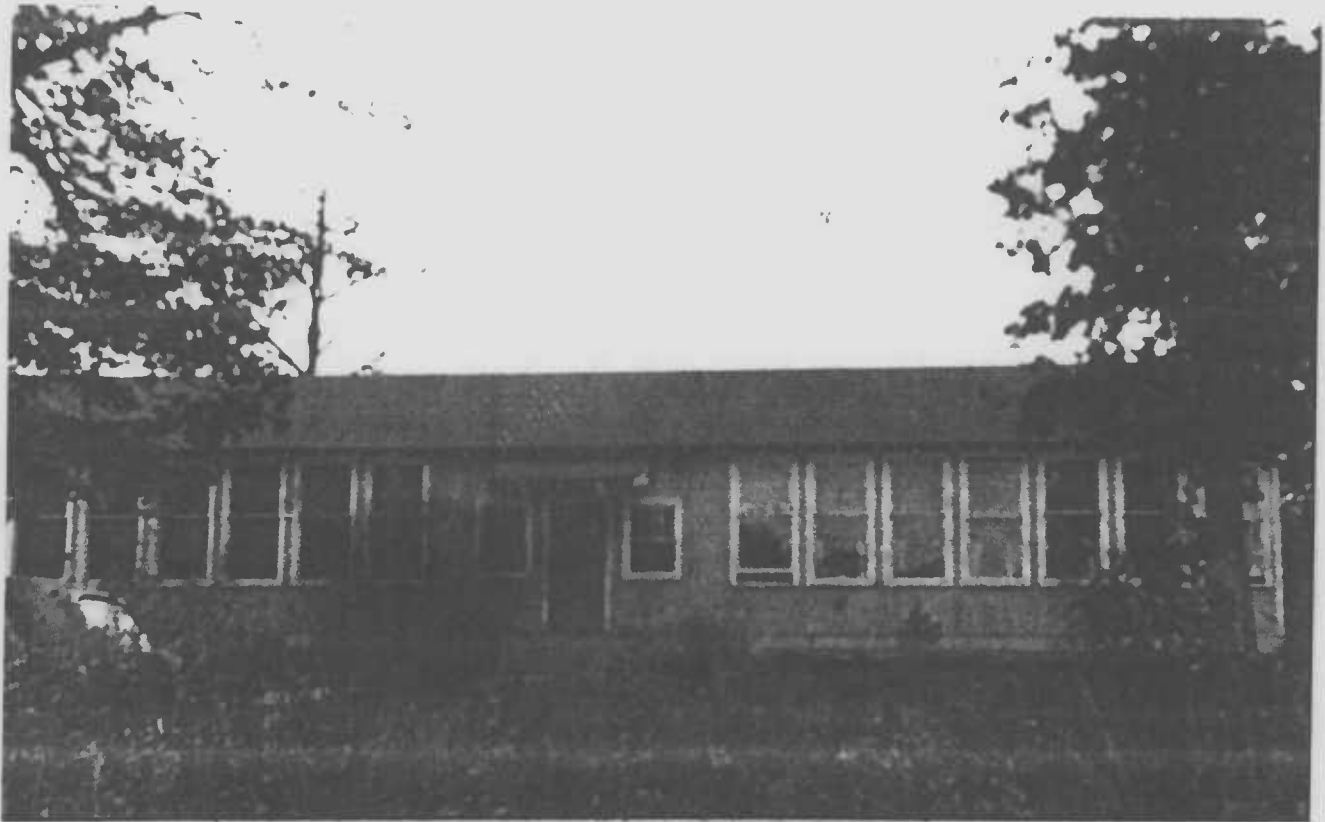
Summary

The Julius Rosenwald Fund's school building program officially ended in 1932. By that time almost 15,000 teachers were instructing over 650,000 black children in 5,357 Rosenwald-sponsored schools throughout the South. The buildings could accommodate more than two-fifths of the African-American children enrolled in school. The number of buildings aided by the Fund exceeded the total number of schools of every sort that existed for blacks in the southern states at the beginning of the Fund's program. The value of these schools in 1932 was more than twice that of all black rural-school property at the beginning of the effort in 1917. One in every ten Rosenwald schools provided high school-level instruction. African-American high school enrollment in the South increased from few thousand in 1920 to approximately 125,000 in 1931, an increase directly attributable to the Rosenwald building campaign.⁶

Rosenwald schools set an example of beauty, efficiency and sanitation. During this era they set the standard for all school construction; Rosenwald plans were used for more than 15,000 white schools which otherwise had no relation to the Fund. The success of the Fund was not so much in the amount it contributed or the number of schools it helped to build, but in intangibles that can not be measured. Mr. Rosenwald's biographers believed the Fund's success was primarily expressed in the effect of increased literacy in the lives of African-Americans, through the opportunities that education provided.⁷ Arguably, the Rosenwald Fund's school building program represents the most important movement in black education prior to the court-ordered desegregation of schools in the 1960s.

8.4 Significance (continued)

1938 photograph of Marley Neck School from the collection "Anne Arundel County Schools Insured by Chas. F. Lee & Company". Copy located at Anne Arundel County Department of Planning and Code Enforcement, Annapolis, Maryland. Original is located at the Anne Arundel County Free School Museum on Lavall Drive in Davidsonville, Maryland



MARLEY NECK

AA-2066 Marley Neck School
(Hall Memorial Methodist Church Hall)
USGS Map: Curtis Bay Quad
Scale: 1" = 24,000'





AA-2066

MARLEY Neck School (Hall Memorial Church Hall)

Solley community, Glen Burnie vicinity, Anne Arundel Co.

Photo By SHERR, MARSH, Oct. 1996

Negative at Maryland SHPO

Front (East) elevation

Photo 1 of 2



FA-2066
MARLEY NECK SCHOOL
HALLS MEMORIAL CHURCH HALL

SOLLEY COMMUNITY, GLEN BURNIE VICINITY
ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

PHOTO BY Sherri M. Marsh, Oct. 1996

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

REAR (NW) PERSPECTIVE

PHOTO 2 OF 2